

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A sound wave guide structure for a speaker system comprising:

a sound passage space connecting an inlet opening to an outlet opening[[:]], the sound passage space being configured to branch in plural stages in a range from the inlet opening to the outlet opening to form a plurality of sound wave guide paths extending from the inlet opening to the outlet opening,

wherein at least one sound wave guide path is branched into a first branch and a second branch at a first branch point, the first branch extending substantially linearly, the second branch being angled with respect to the first branch, and the second branch extending in a curved shape and having a length substantially the same as a length of the first branch between the first branch point and a second branch point downstream of the first branch point.

2. (Canceled).

3. (Previously presented) The sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 1, wherein center axes of the plurality of sound wave guide paths are included in a flat plane.

4. (Previously presented) The sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 1, wherein center axes of the plurality of sound wave guide paths are included in a curved plane or a bent plane.

5. (Previously presented) The sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 1, wherein the outlet opening has a slit shape, and the sound wave guide path branches at respective branch points in a longitudinal direction of a slit of the outlet opening.

6. (Original) The sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 5, wherein the outlet opening of the slit shape extends in a straight line shape.

7. (Original) The sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 5, wherein the outlet opening of the slit shape extends to be curved in a convex curved line shape.

8. (Original) The sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 5, wherein the outlet opening of the slit shape extends to be curved in a convex circular arc shape.

9. (Original) The sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 5, wherein the outlet opening of the slit shape extends to be curved in a concave curved line shape.

10. (Original) The sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 5, wherein the outlet opening of the slit shape extends to be curved in a concave circular arc shape.

11. (Previously presented) The sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 1, wherein essentially all of the plurality of sound wave guide paths have a substantially equal path length.

12. (Previously presented) The sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 5, wherein the sound wave guide path having an outlet at a position closer to a center of the outlet opening of the slit shape has a shorter path length.

13. (Previously presented) The sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 5, wherein the sound wave guide path having an outlet at a position closer to a center of the outlet opening of the slit shape has a longer path length.

14. (Previously Presented) The sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 11, wherein the path length is defined along a line passing through a middle point in a width direction of the path just after a branch point.

15. (Canceled).

16. (Previously presented) The sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 1, wherein at least part of at least one of the plurality of sound wave guide paths extends in a S shape.

17. (Previously presented) The sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the plurality of sound wave guide paths has a largest height in an intermediate region between the inlet opening and the outlet opening of the sound passage space.

18. (Previously Presented) The sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 17, wherein the sound wave guide path has the largest height at a branch point thereof or in the vicinity of the branch point.

19. (Previously presented) The sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 1, wherein sound wave guide paths branch from a branch point, and the sound wave guide paths extending from the branch point merge at a merge point.

20. (Previously presented) A horn speaker in which the sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 1 is applied to a throat portion thereof.

21. (Previously presented) The sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 2, wherein center axes of the plurality of sound wave guide paths are included in a flat plane.

22. (Previously presented) The sound wave guide structure for a speaker system according to claim 2, wherein center axes of the plurality of sound wave guide paths are included in a curved plane or a bent plane.

23. (Currently Amended) A sound wave guide structure for a speaker system comprising:

- a sound passage space connecting an inlet opening to an outlet opening;
- the sound passage space defining a longitudinal axis;
- a plurality of branch points formed within the sound passage space, each of the branch points arranged to branch a portion of the sound passage space from ~~[[one]]~~ a first branch path to ~~[[two]]~~ second and third branch paths; and
- a plurality of stages spaced apart along the longitudinal axis, each of the plurality of branch points disposed at one of the plurality of stages,

wherein the second branch path extends substantially linearly, the third branch path being angled with respect to the second branch path, and the third branch path extends in a curved shape and has a length substantially the same as a length of the second branch path between the first branch point and a second branch point downstream of the first branch point.

24. (Previously Presented) The sound wave guide structure of claim 23, wherein the sound passage space includes a throat portion having a base end adjacent the inlet opening and a tip end, and wherein a first one of the plurality of stages is disposed adjacent the base end of the throat portion and a second one of the plurality of stages is disposed adjacent a midpoint of the throat portion measured along the longitudinal axis.

25. (Previously Presented) The sound wave guide structure of claim 24, wherein a third one of the plurality of stages is disposed adjacent a midpoint between the second one of the plurality of stages and the tip end of the throat measured along the longitudinal axis.

26. (Currently Amended) The sound wave guide structure of claim 23, wherein the outlet opening is slit shaped and wherein the ~~branch paths are arranged to exit~~ sound passage exits the tip end of the throat portion aligned along the slit shaped outlet opening.

27. (New) The sound wave guide structure of claim 1, wherein the first branch and the second branch are arranged asymmetrically with respect to the one sound wave guide path.

28. (New) A sound wave guide device as part of a speaker system, the sound wave guide device comprising:

an inlet opening coupled to a speaker device;

a plurality of outlet openings aligned in a first direction; and

a plurality of sound wave paths extending from the inlet opening to the outlet openings and being divided by a plurality of branch points, the plurality of branch points being present between the inlet opening and the outlet openings and dividing the plurality of sound wave paths into a plurality of branches,

wherein a first branch point divides a first sound wave path into first and second branches, the first branch extending substantially linearly from the first sound wave path, the second branch being angled with respect to the first sound wave path, and the second branch is curved so that a length of the second branch is substantially the same as a length of the first branch between the first branch point and a second branch point.